

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The project that became *Cruel Optimism* began when I was a Leverhulme fellow at Lancaster University for a number of years, in conversation (now for over a decade) with the wonderful and brilliant crew of Bev Skeggs, Sarah Franklin, Sara Ahmed, Celia Lury, Jackie Stacey, Imogen Tyler, and the much-grieved Paul Fletcher. Speaking of grieving, it was during a conversation with Bill Readings about Lyotard that I first saw optimism as the thing that keeps the event open, for better or ill. Thanks to Roger Rouse for continuing to brainstorm with my aleatory thoughts about aleatoriness and my transnational thoughts about capital. Thanks to Ian Horswill for collaborating with me on

everything related to anxiety and happiness, including all those long talks about politics, neuropsychology, and attachment (and Puck). Lee Edelman, one of the Press readers of the manuscript, did an extremely close and improving reading of the thing. I was already grateful for his friendship and collaboration; to have been able to work with his notes was a real gift, and I am almost abject with admiration. The other Press reader also read brilliantly and transferentially in the best sense, and I hope notes her/his substantial impact on the revisions.

To Ken Wissoker and Rachel Furnari, I can't thank you enough for all of your help and labor, including continuing to push me to get things done well, and for being so alive to the ambit of the work. I also greatly appreciate the calming, clarifying, and creative labor of the volume's editor, G. Neal McTighe, and its inspired designer, Amy Ruth Buchanan. More than thanks go to Riva Lehrer for permitting me to display and engage *If Body: Riva and Zora in Middle Age*. Other props go to the people who read and talked substantively with me about this project: Dipesh Chakrabarty, Tom Mitchell, Claire Pentecost, Mandy Berry, Dana Luciano, Amelia Jones, Kris Cohen, and Katie Stewart. And so much thanks to the broader Public Feelings/Feel Tank cohort for providing such a generous, flint-edged, thoughtful context for working things through and feeling things out: Sam Baker, Ann Cvetkovich, Lisa Duggan, Ruthie Gilmore, Debbie Gould, Vanalyne Green, Neville Hoad, Miranda Joseph, Heather Love, Fred Moten, José Muñoz, Amy Partridge, Mary Patten, Matthias Regan, Sandy Soto, Katie Stewart, Rebecca Zorach. *Cruel Optimism* is a Public Feelings project.

I dedicate this book to Katie Stewart, a stunning thinker, a fearless writer, a seriously critical-generous interlocutor, and one of those friends whom philosophers imagine when they dilate on the word "friend."